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Editorial: Changing the Possible...

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Editorial: Changing the Possible...

Editorial

Changing the Possible...

Glen GoodKnight

Some changes have begun in this issue, which will be explained below.

One would expect that the readership of Mythlore and/or the membership of The Mythopoeic Society would comprise people with closely similar interests and preferences. After all, what Mythlore and the Society state what they are interested in is open and clear. We might come to Mythlore and the Society expecting to find others who closely share our viewpoints. Since we know no others exactly like ourselves, we should not be that surprised to find some divergent interests among readers of Mythlore. This has been made clear to me — certainly not for the first time — when tallying the Questionnaire responses. For every person who wants one thing, it seems someone else wants the opposite. For example, comments on the questionnaires included: more Inklings material, less Inklings material; more Tolkien, less Tolkien; more Lewis, less Lewis; more photographs, no photographs. The same applies for poetry, art, reviews, etc.. To be able to please everyone on every matter is surely not possible, and the attempt to do so makes for a quick passage to the asylum. Shall we then freeze in indecision? Surely not. Keeping in mind the purpose of this journal, the solution is to attempt to please the majority as well as we can, tempered by experience and the best judgement one can hope for. If you personally find something not exactly to your liking, by all means say so. We cannot work with information we do not have. Understand at the same time that in such a large group of varying opinions, no one will find things exactly to their liking. This is as equally true for this editor as anyone else. Knowing it is impossible to please all in every aspect, we seek to change and improve the possible for the overall good of the journal and its readers.

Almost no responses expressed a desire to omit anything found in the journal. Indeed, it was gratifying to see that many said they very much liked it the way it was. Keeping in mind there is always room for improvement, there were a number of interesting suggestions for changes and additions. Because of several suggestions, we have changed the lettering of titles for more readability. Unless there is strong reaction, beginning with the next issue we will phase in pages with larger print. This page and page 31 are examples. The original layout pages will be smaller so there will be less reduction, making the size of the print about 20% larger. We will phase in the change over several issues, because some of the material for future issues has already been typed in the larger format. Starting with this issue we have changed the page numbering format and are introducing a section to briefly give the background of contributors of articles and cover art.

Those who asked for fiction in Mythlore can now find it in Mythellany, which is a Society publication devoted to fiction. A number of people have asked for more letters — something which I would very much like to see — and specific kinds of articles. We cannot print that which we do not receive. Please

share your ideas in letters and articles, as well as in art, reviews, poetry, and other forms of expression. We are quite open to a variety of viewpoints and approaches. This leads to the subject of Special Issues. The responses on this were so varied that I fear most of the suggestions would not be eagerly received by a majority of readers. However the idea of having Theme Issues seems quite feasible, and would probably be well received. For those interested in writing articles, or who might be spurred to write them, here is a list of some readers' suggestions:

How T(olkien), L(ewis) & W(illiams) deal with particular subjects or themes; the Great Dance; Comparisons of similarities and differences in TLW; Magic in TLW; Images of Hell in TLW; other Inklings; an up to date analysis of Tolkien in light of The Silmarillion, Unfinished Tales, and The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien (mentioned by far the most, possibly a whole issue could be devoted to this); the non-Middle-earth works of Tolkien; the Tolkien family; The Silmarillion; Norse and Celtic influences on Tolkien; Elvish Philology; Races of Middle-earth; Unfinished Tales; Tolkien art; Christopher Tolkien; the Tolkien imitators; C.S. Lewis; Lewis art; books similar to Narnia; MacDonald's & Chesterton's influence on Lewis; Charles Williams; The Matter of Britain; Victorian Fantasy; Owen Barfield and his relation to other Inklings; Dorothy Sayers; New Fantasy; Art; George MacDonald; Ursula K. Leguin; Patricia McKillip; Biographies of Fantasy Authors; Fairy Tales; Travel Between Worlds; Religion in Fantasy; The Prose Edda; Women Authors and/or Female Characters; G.K. Chesterton; Kurtz; Darkover; L'Engle; Disney's Influence on American Folklore; Joy Chant; Poe-Lovecraft; Susan Cooper; Non-Western Mythologies; MacDonald's children stories; Barrie; Lewis Carroll; Lloyd Alexander; Evangeline Walton; Merlin; The Fool; Alan Garner; Evelyn Underhill; Jewish Fantasy; Lord Dunsany; L. Frank Baum; Dragons; William Morris; Greco-Roman Mythology; Apologetics in Fantasy; Allegory; E. R. Eddison; Milton; Dante; E. Nesbit; and Kenneth Grahame.

Several people said either they didn't like the idea of special or theme issues, or that they liked a mix of familiar and unfamiliar. Even if some of the above ideas don't produce a theme issue, perhaps they will provoke one or more articles. When the Subject Index of the first 30 issues of Mythlore appears in the next issue, you will find that some of these topics have been covered to some extent in the past. This index will be useful to consult in determining what ground would be good to reconsider, and what areas have not yet been explored.

I know some readers would like to know the results of the rating of the features, as well as the reaction to the question of advertisements and an auction. The following figures are from the responses received and tallied by December 15. I regret Poetry was not included on the Questionnaire, and will include it on the

next one. Most readers have not yet sent in the Questionnaire. If you have not, please do now. Your responses are sought for a more complete understanding of how the readers feel on a wide range of questions.

FEATURES	adv. %	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Announcements	3.89	14	14	18	10	8	1	8	5	5
Art	3.25	27	22	7	8	9	3	4	6	3
Articles	3.10	29	22	18	2	2	4	1	5	7
Columns	3.78	21	17	17	4	9	4	4	3	10
Editorials	3.65	21	24	11	7	5	7	5	2	6
Inklings Bib.	3.24	39	11	12	5	4	3	3	4	9
Letters	3.72	20	8	23	12	8	3	9	2	5
Reviews	3.01	34	20	12	6	2	3	6	2	6
Ads	4.04	16	8	8	10	18	4	2	2	7
Auction	3.91	29	3	6	12	12	1	6	5	8

These results are made somewhat vague, since we are not sure whether the responses were evaluating only the last issue or for several recent issues. It may be that some responses reversed the numerical order, thinking that the higher number represented more approval; at least one person feared this might happen. The results do show that there is indeed a spectrum of opinion on every feature and question. The last two items: Ads and Auction, indicate preference in seeing them appear in *Mythlore*, and should be considered separate from the other features. Not all responses gave a rating for all items, especially the last two.

PROMOTION

Why does *Mythlore* need promotion? The simple answer is that we feel we have a unique and worthy journal that many others are quite interested in when and if they know about our existence. Many responses said they learned about us from a book mentioning us or by finding us in a library. With a larger readership many things can be more realizable: typesetting, color covers, more pages, a larger body of people to make submissions, keeping down the rising costs of inflation, and other refinements, but above all to be a fuller vehicle of information and communication to the community of people who share our interests.

I very much appreciate the large number of suggestions for promotion from the Questionnaires. They breakdown into three categories: 1. What the Staff and Society Officers can do themselves at no great financial outlay. 2. What the Staff and Society Officers can do with financial outlay. 3. What you, the reader, can do for promotion.

Number 1 would include writing to English Departments, various forms of the media, various periodicals, other varied organizations, Discussion Groups, etc.

Number 2 would include advertising through a number of ways. This is quite important, but with our limited resources, it must be done quite selectively. If more readers would support *Mythlore* by making contributions and become Patrons we would be able to do much much more in this vital area.

Number 3, what you can do directly, includes:

- A. Using the two enclosed flyers for:
 1. Posting in Specialty Bookstores
 2. Posting in Libraries, English Departments, etc.
 3. Distributing to friends, instructors, librarians, groups, etc.
- B. If you are an academic faculty member, request your library to subscribe. Last summer the Society's Corresponding Secretary and I sent out an extensive mailing to college and university libraries, with only a small response. Since then I have been informed that the best and nearly only way that an academic library will subscribe to a publication is for an instructor to specifically request it. If you are not on a faculty, ask a friendly faculty member to make the request.
- C. If you are an English Instructor, mention, show, and otherwise promote *Mythlore* in your classes and to other faculty members. If you are not a faculty member, ask

(please continue on page 42)

PREVIEW of the Next Issue

The Attic of Faerie (Guest of Honor Speech at the 1981 Mythopoeic Conference) by Elizabeth M. Pope

C.S. Lewis Dances with the Elves (Guest of Honor Speech at the 1981 Mythopoeic Conference) by Joe R. Christopher

"All Shall Love Me and Despair": The Figure of Lilith in Tolkien, Lewis, Williams and Sayers by Meredith Price

Symbols of Immortality: A Comparison of European and Elvish Heraldry by Margaret Purdy

Battle Strategy in *Perelandra*: *Beowulf* Revisited by Darlene Logan

A Jungian Reading of the *Kalevala* (Part III) by Bettina Knapp

Subject Index to *Mythlore*, Issues 1-30 by David Bratman

and more, as space permits, plus all the regular features.



SUBMISSIONS

Mythlore welcomes submissions of articles, art, reviews, poetry, as well as other materials. See Page 2 for the address of the appropriate Editor when making a submission. Contributors of articles, cover and back cover art, should also submit a short biographical paragraph for publication.

While not required, we would appreciate having manuscripts typed in format: single spaced in 4 1/2 inch wide column, double spaced between paragraphs with a carbon ribbon typewriter. To save space, please restrict the use of footnotes in incorporating "ibid." and "op. cit." citations in your text in parentheses. Type your name and address on the first page, and your last name on each succeeding page; staple cover letter and pages together. An enclosed postcard will hasten acknowledgement. Enclose self-addressed envelope with paper-clipped stamps.

Full page art should have an image area of 7 1/2 inches by 10 inches. Original art may be larger than this, so long as the proportional ratio is the same. Smaller art should be 4 1/2 inches wide, and may be from 1 to 6 inches tall. Art that is meant to be 2 columns wide on a page of text should be 9 1/2 inches in width.

There are no special requirements for reviews, poetry, or other material.

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